

REMARKS

The present amendments and remarks are in response to the Office Action dated December 27, 2005, wherein the Examiner has allowed claims 8-13, has rejected claims 1-4 and 14-16, and has indicated that claim 5-7 would be allowable if rewritten in independent form. Applicants appreciate the Examiner's statement of allowable subject matter regarding claims 5-7 and 8-13. By the present amendments, Applicants have amended claims 1 and 6 and have canceled claims 2-5 and 14-16 without prejudice. Accordingly, claims 1 and 6-13 remain in the present application. A Notice of Allowance directed to claims 1 and 6-13 is respectfully requested in view of the amendments and the following remarks.

A. Amendment to the Specification

The Examiner has requested the Applicant's cooperation in correcting any typographical and grammatical errors. Accordingly, Applicant has corrected paragraph [77] of the specification to replace reference label "114" with reference label --118--. This correction is consistent with the original drawings that were filed with the application. It is respectfully submitted that no new matter has been introduced.

B. Rejection of Claims Under 35 USC § 103(a)

The Examiner has rejected claims 1-4 under 35 U.S.C. §103(a), as being unpatentable over U.S. Patent No. 5,564,086 to Cygan ("Cygan"), in view of U.S.

Patent No. 6,362,690 to Tichauer ("Tichauer"). Applicant respectfully disagrees, however, to expedite the prosecution of the present application, Applicants have amended claim 1 to include the limitations of allowable claim 5. Claims 2-5 have been canceled without prejudice, and Applicants reserve the right to pursue the subject matter of claims 2-5 and original claim 1 in a subsequent application. Applicants respectfully submit that claim 1 is now in condition for allowance.

The Examiner has also rejected claims 14-16 under 35 U.S.C. §103(a), as being unpatentable over U.S. Patent No. 5,778,308 to Sroka ("Sroka"), in view of Tichauer. Applicants respectfully disagree, however to expedite the prosecution of the present application, Applicants have canceled claims 14-16 without prejudice and reserve the right to pursue the subject matter of claims 14-16 in a subsequent application.

C. Allowable Subject Matter

Claims 6-13 stand allowed.

On page 5 of the Office Action, the Examiner has objected to claims 5-7 as being dependent upon a rejected base claim and indicates that these claims would be allowable if rewritten in independent form including all the limitations of the base claim and any intervening claims. Applicants appreciate the Examiner's statement of allowance regarding claims 5-7. As noted above, Applicants have canceled dependent claim 5 and have amended claim 1 to include the limitations originally specified by claim 5. Claim 6 has been amended to depend upon claim

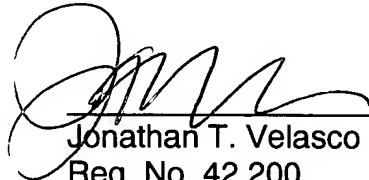
1. Applicants respectfully submit that claims 1, 6 and 7 are now in condition for allowance.

D. Conclusion

For the foregoing reasons, a Notice of Allowance directed to claims 1 and 6-13 remaining in the present application is respectfully requested.

Respectfully Submitted;

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Appendix A
REPLACEMENT DRAWING SHEETS